

Haven Happenings

Haven Happenings, Issue #20

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ingridshaven.net.au

Welcome to the latest issue of *Haven Happenings*, the quarterly newsletter from Ingrid's Haven cat sanctuary.



To me it wasn't long ago since I wrote the last Haven Happenings. It was about the influx of kittens over Christmas and now it seems the felines are celebrating Christmas in July – they still keep on coming, those little ones.

Recently I got a litter of four very tiny ones that I hand reared. They were not in the best of shapes but I could only try and at least they were warm and their bellies full. Grandma Doris kept a watchful eye on them but as she is getting old – 20 in August – I only let the kittens sleep with her a couple of hours a day for them to get the warmth and feel of a grandma.

Down in the shed there are another 11 kittens waiting for homes and they are only young too but de-sexed and ready to go.

We had a great adoption recently. Elton – the 'attack cat' – found himself a home. Elton, a shelter cat since 2008, had been re-homed twice before but came back as he was too unpredictable. I made the decision not ever to re-home him again but I was swayed to give him one last try. One of the

volunteers used to tell me stories about her dog from 'hell' that family and friends wanted her to give up but Bec stood by her dog, she had adopted him, he is her family member and he stays. It was her decision and definitely something I could relate to. When Bec started talking about Elton I didn't take her seriously but one day she asked me outright if she was allowed to adopt this very handsome cat. I told her again what the other vollies and former owners had told me about Elton but this didn't worry Bec. When I came home from work one Sunday I was told Elton had sprayed Bec, he marked her to get the adoption process rolling, I think, letting her know she was his and he was hers. Not even I could resist such determination so Elton was packed up and moved to become part of the Bec household. So far the reports back are promising. Bec will not put up with bad behaviours, she will set rules for Elton, he will learn what is right and what is wrong and it may help that I had all his teeth removed a couple of years ago because of some gum problems.

For those of you who don't know, my Grand Canyon enclosure has been dedicated and sponsored by the family of Erling Eikholm, a Norwegian man who loved cats but had no relatives left in Norway. Erling's brother Björn and his wife Lynne had a plaque made that I put up on the shed wall in Grand Canyon to keep Erling's memory alive. The first cat named Erling has already found a home and Erling II arrived from the pound two months ago.

I end here with a huge thank you to the volunteers, affectionately called the vollies, and to my sponsors/followers – please know that you are the ones making this huge operation possible. We are all saving lives on a daily basis. We are all happy little Havenites, regardless of the role we play in the Haven set up.

Thank you all and until next time – take care, cuddle your pets and stay warm.

Ingrid & the Cats

Helping your cat with arthritis stay comfortable in winter

With winter well and truly here, it's a good time to be conscious of the symptoms of osteoarthritis, one of the most common afflictions of senior cats (yes, cats get arthritis too!).

The colder weather can wreak havoc on joints and cause a great deal of discomfort.

Depending on the personality of your cat and the severity of the arthritis, you may notice some of the following signs:

- Difficulty getting up or down from places they used to handle easily
- Obvious lameness, especially in the front legs
- Front legs look bent and turned out
- Has become slow or wobbly, or legs tremble and shake when standing too long
- Has become thin, or lost muscle mass
- Coat looks poor (cats have difficulty grooming if they have arthritis)
- Has become grumpy or seems sore when picked up



With a little preparation and coordination with your vet, you can help your cat keep the pep in his step through the colder weather. Some possible treatments you can consider and discuss with your vet include:

1. A veterinary consultation and diagnostic x-rays to help to confirm the diagnosis
2. Weight control (excess weight can place more pressure on painful joints, so getting rid of unwanted kilos in a slow and controlled manner is recommended)
3. Joint support medication and anti-inflammatory drugs
4. Food or food products that provide health or medical benefits and supplements e.g. Joint Guard and Hills feline j/d.
5. Home comforts/environment changes to make your cat as comfortable as possible including providing your cat with:
 - soft bedding
 - a quiet and non-drafty places to sleep
 - self-warming beds or wheat bags
 - low sided kitty litter trays for easy access and to prevent toileting accidents
 - steps near favourite furniture and beds to aid in getting up and down
 - extra grooming of coats and nails

Quote of the Day



"If animals could speak, the dog would be a blundering outspoken fellow; but the cat would have the rare grace of never saying a word too much."
~~Mark Twain

Happy tails

Dear Ingrid

Here is a photo of Muffin, formerly Phyllis, on an investigation of the kitchen.

She is fascinated by water in the sink and tries to catch it with her paws. She has also become very partial to Vegemite and manages to steal bits of Peter's toast in the morning. He has nicknamed her 'Miss Stripey Socks' as he says her legs look like she is wearing striped socks.

She loves to run and as our house is quite open-plan she dashes from the family room, through the dining room, into the lounge room, and takes off about halfway through landing on the couch. She then looks at me as if to say "Did you see that?" I say, "Yes I did, aren't you a clever girl?"

I work two days a week and when I get home I call out "Muffin, Mum's home - where are you?" Then I hear a loud meow and she is usually on the bedroom window sill watching the birds.

I think we have one very happy cat!

Regards

Joan



More happy tails

Hi Ingrid

It's been over a year since I brought Daisy (Liz) home and I just wanted to let you know that we think she is amazing!

She has settled into our home and with our other cats just perfectly.

I'm home during the day with my 6 month old daughter and generally wherever Layla and I are, so is Daisy - she is my shadow!

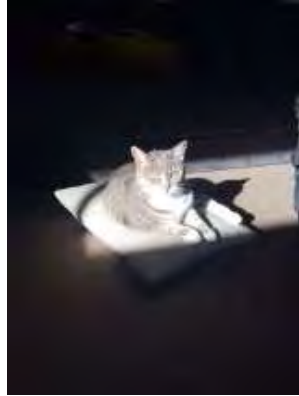
If I'm holding Layla, Daisy will jump up on my lap and cuddle in, even letting Layla have a soft pat and a grab of her tail.

Daisy also gives the best head butts. She will come from the other side of the room just to give you one.

She has such a beautiful, gentle, playful personality and we just love her. So a big thank you for saving her life!

Thank you so much

Brea



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Cat's Instruction Manual

So why is it that your cat always knows when to get under your feet? It appears the mischievous cat certainly knows where to be and what to be doing at the right place and time in your home. Check out this Cat's Instruction Manual, and find out what is really going on....



The bathroom

Always accompany guests to the bathroom. It is not necessary to do anything. Just sit and stare.

Doors

Do not allow any closed doors in any room. To get the door open, stand on hind legs and hammer with forepaws. Once door is opened, it is not necessary to use it. After you have ordered an 'outside' door opened, stand halfway in and halfway out and think about several things. This is particularly important during very cold weather, rain or mosquito season.

Chairs and rugs

If you have to throw up, get to a chair quickly. If you cannot manage in time, get to an Oriental rug. If there is no Oriental rug, a shag is good. When throwing up on the carpet, make sure you back up so it is as long as a human's bare foot.

Hampering

If one of your humans is engaged in some activity and the other is idle, stay with the busy one. This is called 'hampering'. Following are the rules for hampering:

- When supervising cooking, sit just behind the left heel of the cook. You cannot be seen and thereby stand a better chance of being stepped on and then picked up and comforted.
- For book readers, get in close under the chin, between eyes and book - unless you can lie across the book itself.
- When human is working at computer, jump up on desk, walk across keyboard, bat at mouse pointer on screen and then lay in human's lap across arms, hampering typing in progress.

Walking

As often as possible, dart quickly and as close as possible in front of a human, especially on stairs when they have something in their arms, in the dark, and when they first get up in the morning. This will help their coordination skills.

Bedtime

Always sleep on the human at night so they cannot move around.

Litter box

When using the litter box, be sure to kick as much litter out of the box as possible. Humans love the feel of kitty litter between their toes.

Hiding

Every now and then, hide in a place where the humans cannot find you. Do not come out for three or four hours under any circumstances. This will cause the humans to panic (which they love) thinking that you have run away or are lost. Once you do come out, the humans will cover you with love and kisses and you probably will get a treat.

One last thought...

Whenever possible, get close to a human, especially their face, turn around and present your bum to them. Humans love this so do it often. And don't forget the guests.